

THE ENTERPRISE-ROMAN AND THE LEGAL TIMES

DO YOU REMEMBER?

BY LEWIS ROBSON

(Editor's Note: This is the first of a series of pictures that recall the buildings and scenes of many years ago. The picture formerly appeared in "History of Van Buren Township", by Dr. Samuel Robbe, and is re-produced here by permission of the author.)

Belleville—The following information about the old Red Mill appeared in the book written by Dr. Samuel H. Robbe, "History of Van Buren Township", and is reprinted here with the permission of the author.

"Like nearly every other village of a century ago Belleville had its old red mill. It was built in 1837 and stood at the foot of the hill on the south side of Main Street. As nearly as we can trace from the records in Detroit, the building was erected upon land belonging to John B. Graham who later sold it to Mr. Bell, who built the mill. Graham, who lived in the state of New York, was a land speculator who came and took up several pieces of Government land here and



in Huron township. He was reputed to be a very wealthy man and his holdings reached the length of the Huron valley.

The dam which was built of logs and dirt in 1836 rendered faithful service for nearly sixteen years. The mill property passed through many hands and in 1891 was deeded by Cuyler Coy to James and Martha Coomer. Mr. Coomer built a new dam at the west bridge in the fall of 1900, creating a pond of 25 acres and supplying 40 horse-power. He also built a new

mill almost opposite the old mill upon the north side of the street.

In 1903 the property passed to the Bank of Belleville and later to the Detroit Edison Company. In the meantime the mill burned and the dam went out. Both sites are now covered by the backwater of the dam at French Landing.

The new mill erected by James Coomer burned in 1911 and in the fall of that year the mill flume was again cleaned out and a mill for grinding feed erected. This also burned, compelling farmers living in the township to take their grists to Ypsilanti, Wayne or New Boston to be ground. By this time

